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Thought for the Month

Who is more unjust
Than one who forges
A lie against Allah
Or rejects His Signs?
For such, their portion
Appointed must reach them
From the Book (of Decrees):
Until, when Our messengers
(Of death) arrive and take
Their souls, they say:
"Where are the things
That ye used to invoke
Besides Allah?"
They will reply, "They
Have left us in the lurch,"
And they will bear witness
Against themselves, that they
Had rejected Allah.

Al-Qur'an-7:37

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Gender equality has always been a sensitive and difficult issue. Nowadays, there are many misconceptions in society about women's backwardness and reputation. In this context, Islam is targeted for their general status. The charge is totally baseless when we go through the original text of Islam, i.e., the Qur'an. There we find how Islam has raised the status of women by giving them different rights and roles in life. From the Islamic perspective, the idea of equality between the two genders is asserted by mentioning the fact of their birth itself, with all humankind described as emerging from a single male and a single female.... In the utmost form of equality—spiritual equality—there is no distinction among people on the basis of their sex, race, or social status. Everyone in the world whether male or female is primarily considered to be a human, and they are portrayed as complete beings with their responsibility to fulfil their physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual needs and do their duties, while keeping their higher purpose in life at the core of their personal and communal visions. Hence, the Qur'anic view is of humans flourishing, above and beyond gender roles, in this life and the hereafter.

The situation of women before the arrival of Islam was deplorable and debatable. They lived an unpleasant and unhappy life. Women then were viewed as mere chattels and not as human personalities. Due to the lowly regard in which they were held and the belief that having a daughter would bring a man shame and ignominy, several tribes adopted the practice of infanticide. Girls who managed to escape death at birth were harshly abused. As they grew older, they were used as workhorses and believed to be soulless beings without feelings or emotions. In fact, women were treated like slaves in pre-Islamic Arabian pagan society, with no rights or respect. In the absence of male descendants, the property would go to the closest male relative rather than to a daughter, and women had no right to a share of either the father's or the husband's property. The typical form of marriage as we know it today was non-existent. There were marriages that could be classified as no more than opportunities for fornication, prostitution, adultery, or polyandry. Girls were not permitted to choose their life partners. Rich individuals occasionally bought attractive ladies from among their relatives. There were no restrictions on how many women men might marry, and they were even allowed to marry two of their own sisters simultaneously. Married women were compelled to have extramarital affairs, and female servants were turned into prostitutes only for financial gain by their employers.

The situation of women began to improve with the arrival of Islam. Islam's founder, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), did everything in his power to elevate their status. To begin with, the Prophet (PBUH) put an end to infanticide.... Prophet accords both genders equal dignity. Islam permitted women to go to school. Consequently, the majority of women started going to school. In Islam, women were free to select their spouses. Islam forbade parents and other family members from compelling their daughters to get married. Girls could pick the husbands they wanted. The Holy Qur'an was permitted to be read by women. As a result, the state of women started to get better. Islam gave women the freedom to own their own business. It permitted widows to remarry. Women were granted inheritance rights.

From Inter-Religious Understanding for Universal Equality and Fraternity
by Prof. M. Afzal Wani (ed.), pp. 119-121

Activities of the IOS Headquarters

IOS two-day International Conference on "Prof. AbdulHamid Ahmad AbuSulayman: Personality, Intellectual and Scholastic Legacy"

A two-day online International Conference on "Prof. AbdulHamid Ahmad AbuSulayman: Personality, Intellectual and Scholastic Legacy" was organised by the Institute of Objective Studies (IOS) in collaboration with AbdulHamid AbuSulayman Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, IIUM, Malaysia and International Islamic Fiqh Academy, Jeddah, KSA on December 11 and 12, 2024.

Inaugural Session

The beginning was made by the recitation from the Holy Qur'an by Mr. Shahbaz Alam, a student from INCIEF University, Malaysia.

Former Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Languages, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, Prof. Mohammad Ishaque presented the theme of the conference. Prof. Hamidullah Marazi, Visiting Fellow, ISTAC, IIUM, Malaysia, presented the profile of Prof. AbuSulayman. Secretary General of the International Islamic Fiqh Academy, Jeddah, KSA, H.E. Dr. Koutoub Moustapha Sano delivered the keynote address. There was a special address from Chief Patron and Founding Chairman of the IOS, Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam which was read out by the Secretary General of the IOS, Mr. Mohammad Alam because of his inability to attend physically. Address as a Guest of Honour was delivered by former Founding Secretary General, Alwaleed Bin Talal Foundation, KSA. The family of Prof. Dr. AbdulHamid

AbuSulayman was represented by his daughter, former Founding Secretary General, Alwaleed Bin Talal Foundation, KSA, Dr. Muna AbuSulayman who delivered a touching speech on the occasion. The Dean, AbdulHamid AbuSulayman Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, IIUM, Malaysia, Prof. Dr. Shukran Bin Abd. Rahman also delivered a speech as another Guest of Honour of the session. The Session was presided over by Prof. M. Afzal Wani, Chairman of the Institute of Objective Studies.

Prof. Mohammad Ishaque, former Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Languages, JMI, New Delhi

presenting the profile of Prof. AbuSulayman, said that he stood as a monumental figure in contemporary Islamic thought, celebrated for his extensive contribution to the Islamisation of Knowledge and educational reforms across the Muslim world. He observed that the vibrant intellectual milieu surrounding him, populated by scholars and practitioners of Islamic sciences, profoundly shaped his worldview and instilled a lifelong passion for the pursuit of knowledge. Prof. AbuSulayman developed an acute awareness of the interplay between faith and reason. He often expressed that "The foundation of our understanding must be rooted in both tradition and rational inquiry", a guiding principle that would inform his scholarly endeavours throughout his life. This dual commitment to faith and reason positioned him as a bridge between the past and present and the tradition and modernity.

Prof. Marazi held that one of Prof. AbuSulayman's most significant contributions was his



On the dais (L-R): Prof. (Ms.) Haseena Hashia, Prof. Mohammad Ishaque, Prof. M. Afzal Wani, Prof. Hamidullah Marazi and Mr. Mohammad Alam

highlighted the activities of the IOS in detail, and then, presenting the theme of the conference, he said that Prof. AbuSulayman made a profound contribution to the inter-faith dialogue. His works were the spring board for the young scholars to understand Islam in broader perspective. His ideas stood for charity, pride, brotherhood and solidarity. He realised that cultural crisis in *Ummah* was caused by the absence of cultural progress. Prof. AbuSulayman was a towering personality among Islamic scholars. His ideas were grounded in Islamic knowledge, he added.

Prof. Hamidullah Marazi, Visiting Fellow, ISTAC, IIUM, Malaysia, while

tenure as a founding member and the second Rector of the International Islamic University (IIUM), Malaysia from 1989 to 1999. Under his visionary leadership, IIUM evolved into a vibrant academic institution that harmonised Islamic teachings with modern knowledge fostering critical thinking and ethical education. "Prof. AbdulHamid Ahmad AbuSulayman remains a pivotal figure in the discourse surrounding the Islamisation of Knowledge and educational reforms. His efforts to integrate Islamic principles with modern educational practices have left an indelible mark on the landscape of Islamic thought. As the Muslim world navigates the complexities of the modern age, his

insights serve as a guiding light, emphasising the importance of a comprehensive, ethical and integrated approach to knowledge that meets the needs of society", he pointed out.

H.E. Dr. Koutoub Moustapha Sano, Secretary General of the International Islamic Fiqh Academy, Jeddah, KSA, in his keynote address, observed that Prof. AbuSulayman was an intellectual giant, a critical scholar, a social critic and effective administrator. His intellectual journey of more than a half century, was innovation and cross-fertilisation of ideas and practical solutions. He was always interested in knowing the causes of the decadence and backwardness of the Muslim *Ummah* on the one hand and attempted at developing mechanism and methods of overcoming them on the other. He believed that the Muslim *Ummah* suffered from intellectual malaise that required profound and serious diagnosis. He said, "It is a lived experience in thought and its translation into institutions. In his analysis of the global issues, he believed that the first step is to create a critical approach to the reality based on innovation and creativity".

Dr. Sano held that Prof. AbuSulayman was certainly a visionary, an intellectual and a thinker very sincere and honest. He transformed the trajectory of the IIUM to become a truly international institution. He truly worked for the *Ummah* and humanity at large. Undeniably, he contributed hugely to the socio-economic and intellectual development of Malaysia. Prof. AbuSulayman identified several misconceptions and malformations in the thinking of the *Ummah* leading to an intellectual crisis. In his approach, he rejected the severing of the spiritual from the mundane. Rather, he called for the unification of the spiritual values and ethics with the mundane with regard to the technical applications. He noted that the alternative paradigm Prof. AbuSulayman discussed in his book, in particular, '*Crisis in the*

Muslim Mind' was Islamic *Islah* which meant the authenticity of Islam. This involved a proper methodology with regard to education and knowledge creation and development. He emphasised the need for developing new readings and interpretations to respond intelligently to new challenges with regard to social cohesion and the development of a functional and harmonious family, Dr. Sano added.

Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam, Chief Patron and Founding Chairman of the IOS, said that Prof. AbuSulayman was a remarkable man who was a reform-minded intellectual and an exemplary Muslim. His writings demonstrated his in-depth understanding of the Qur'an and *Sunnah*. He stood apart from other Islamic academics because he did not subscribe to conventional interpretations of Islam. His writings stimulated Muslim intellectuals' minds and exhorted them to quit blaming others for their failures and instead, look within for answers. "He exemplified the critical thinking and forward-thinking mind-set that are essential to bringing about a renaissance and resurrection in the Muslim world. With a lofty vision and mission of a comprehensive Islamic reform project with reform of thoughts and education, he dedicated his entire life to the advancement of education in the Islamic world and consistently pushed for the transformation of Muslim societies via knowledge of the Qur'an and *Sunnah*".

Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam maintained that Prof. AbuSulayman made four trips to India to attend seminars and conferences hosted by the IOS. In February 2001, he received the honorary D.Litt. from Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi. He delivered two lectures at Aligarh on 'Violence and Islam' and 'Child Development in Islamic Perspective'. He asked everyone who is devoted to Prof. AbuSulayman's ideas, thoughts, information, and books – especially IIIT and IIUM, to consider how to realise his aspirations in the light

of shifting global landscape, particularly in the wake of the pandemic and evolving technological development.

Delivering her speech as a guest of honour, Dr. Muna AbuSulayman, former Founding Secretary General, Alwaleed Bin Talal Foundation, KSA, said that her father, Prof. AbuSulayman, was an intellectual doyen and a visionary. He was a philosopher, and did a lot of work in the field of Islamic civilisation and philosophy for the coming generations. He made several areas accessible for researchers. He had a long list of students and left behind a rich intellectual legacy for the young generation. He was beyond narrowness and had a global reach, she pointed out.

As another guest of honour, Prof. Dr. Shukran Bin Abd. Rahman, Dean, AbdulHamid AbuSulayman Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, IIUM, Malaysia, said that he had the privilege of working with Prof. AbuSulayman. He did a missionary work on education which would inspire future generations. His theory of Islamisation of Knowledge was an area which was being strengthened by his students. According to him, there were three domains of knowledge—human knowledge, sound knowledge and Islamic knowledge. Prof. AbuSulayman was instrumental in conceptualising Kulliyah knowledge of Islamic discipline. He tried to achieve the goal of holistic development of curriculum. He made an invaluable contribution to the development of a culture by using his knowledge, Dr. Rahman pointed out.

Delivering the presidential address, Prof. M. Afzal Wani, Chairman, IOS, put the conference in an objectively valuable context by referring to the Qur'anic verse: "[While the wicked people] make will and effort to blow out the 'Noor of Allah' with their mouths (utterances): but Allah will carry 'His Noor' to perfection in all its fullness; painful though it may be to all those

who 'Deny the Truth'. [Al-Qur'an, Surah Saff: 8] He explained that the people with such averse-intentions and actions are found among the human beings almost in every age, but Allah keeps on creating people with good intentions and actions to work to maintain and sustain the enlightenment created by *Noor of Allah*, in its promised endurance. Prof. Wani asserted that the life of Prof. AbdulHamid Ahmad AbuSulayman should be, in all its reflections, understood as one of those blessed persons who choose to work, during their lives, to expand in its perfection the enlightenment created by *Noor of Allah*. He devoted his life to endeavour for the establishment of institutions of international repute and train his students and friends to serve this great cause, important for all the people of the world. Prof. Wani mentioned that Prof. AbuSulayman had opined that faith should not be diluted, it should rather be strengthened with zeal for knowledge.

Counting the qualities of Prof. AbuSulayman, Prof. Wani referred to his works exploring the realities behind crisis in human mind, need for rightful parenting, access to knowledge, desiring a harmonious world and a better future of humanity. Prof. Wani also stated that Prof. AbuSulayman was a person with leadership qualities to perform well in the contemporary times, possessing compassion, reason, humility and respect for others. "Prof. AbuSulayman, besides having respect for others, talked much about *Tawakkal*, courage, observance of the purpose of *Ibadah*, to strengthen the faith and *Tawakkaltu Alallah*", Prof. Wani elucidated. He remarked much emphatically, with reference to the writings of Prof. AbuSulayman and his

underscoring the principle of *Asalah*, that the courage necessary to stand for humanity, human friendliness, protection of global environment (including plant and animal kingdom), peace and justice come from the real enlightenment, the *Noor of Allah*". Concluding his Presidential address, Prof. Wani noted that the life of Prof. AbuSulayman, through so many destinations across the world, is full with inspiration and guidance for working for others with commitment and concern. The closeness between him and Dr. M. Manzoor Alam, Founder of IOS is a great example of intellectual togetherness for working in the arena of the knowledge and enlightenment.



Speakers from top to bottom (L-R) Row 1: Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam, H.E. Dr. Koutoub Moustapha Sano, Dr. Muna AbuSulayman; Row 2: Prof. Mohammad Ishaque, Prof. Dr. Shukran Bin Abd. Rahman,

At the end of inaugural session, the Vice-Chairperson of the Institute, Prof. Haseena Hashia thanked all the speakers, participants, media persons and the organising staff for their contributions.

Technical Session-I

Presided over by Prof. M. Afzal Wani, the first technical session focused on '*Personal life, orientation and emergence as an extraordinary expert of societal issues*'.

Prof. (Dr.) Muhammad Mumtaz Ali from the Department of Usuluddin and Comparative Religion, AHAS Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences,

IIUM, Malaysia, spoke on 'Methodologic Issues: A Critical Analysis of the Contribution of Prof. AbdulHamid AbuSulayman.' He said that he included Prof. AbuSulayman in the list of Revivalist scholars. Revival of humanity was necessary for the survival of humanity, and for this revival of Islamic intellectual framework was necessary. According to time and context, revivalists re-conceptualised the Islamisation of human knowledge. They wanted to see *Ummah* as a developed *Ummah*. He emphasised the need for reviving Islamic thought through the methodology. Intellectual reform must be rational and empirical. He was determined to achieve Islamic reform.

Prof. AbuSulayman offered to give new Islamic theory of methodology—methodology of Islamic thought. He countered western view of Islam by setting forth the exclusiveness of Islamic thought, Dr. Ali said.

Prof. (Dr.) Rahmah Binti Ahmad H. Osman from AHAS Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed

Knowledge and Human Sciences, IIUM, noted that Prof. AbuSulayman was a profound scholar who looked into the potential of Islamic thought. He transformed the research concept despite his fragility. He called for dignity of every individual. He was nurturing Islamic intellect. In England, he commanded respect. He was not only a scholar, but also a servant of humanity. He wanted that Arabic should be learnt by every Muslim, she held.

Dr. Mahmud Mai Jianjun, Assistant Professor, AHAS Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, IIUM, focused on 'Cultivating a *Tawhidic* Mentality for

Muslim *Ummah*'s Renewal'. He said that there was crisis in Muslim societies. There was much concern among Muslims over the sufferings of Palestinians. He called for addressing issues of Islamic thought. There was also the need for actualisation of Islamic worldview and the change in the mindset of Muslim *Ummah*. Muslims should gain knowledge because science and technology have limitations. He said that *Taqwa* and *Sunnah* are essential parts of Islam. In Qur'an, Allah promises to help believers. "If you support Allah, He will support you. *Tawheed* is key and the solution to the problem originating in religion".

Dr. Min Ke Qin, Assistant Professor in AHAS, Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge, IIUM, spoke on 'Prof. AbdulHamid A. AbuSulayman's era and atmosphere'. He said that Prof. AbuSulayman was ahead of his age. He emphasised the need for revitalisation of higher education among Muslims. Muslim countries were facing poverty and *Ummah* was facing a phase of poverty. There was a problem of the State of Israel and the countries around it were facing humiliation. *Ummah* was growing weak and weak. "Israel is a permanent hurdle to the peace in the region. This is the crisis which the Muslim countries should seek solution".

Dr. Lubna Naaz, guest faculty, Department of Islamic Studies, Women's College, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, centered on 'Societal issues facing the Muslim world: A Study of Prof. AbdulHamid A. AbuSulayman'. She said that Prof. AbuSulayman laid emphasis on Islamisation of education in society. He pleaded for universal principles of justice. He also called for incorporation of Islamic values in education. He laid emphasis on the revival of Islamic civilisation, she added.

Technical Session-II

The second technical session was chaired by Prof. Arshi Khan from the

Department of Political Science, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. The theme of the session was '*Prof. AbdulHamid Ahmad AbuSulayman's educational and academic pursuit at International Islamic University Malaysia*'.

Dr. Iyad M.Y. Eid, Assistant Professor, AHAS Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, IIUM, focused on enhancing student's academic research skills through IIUM vision to restore the revival of the *Ummah*. He described Prof. AbuSulayman as a great thinker and a treasure of knowledge. He contributed to society, Dr. Eid said. Dr. Hamoud Yahya Ahmed Mohsen, Assistant Professor, AHAS Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, IIUM, spoke on 'Three years on: Reflecting on Prof. AbdulHamid A. AbuSulayman's transformational leadership and its lasting impact at IIUM'. He held that Prof. AbuSulayman was regarded as a unique gem in the Muslim world. He propounded the theory of Integration of Islamic Knowledge with modern disciplines. He was a global leader of Islamic education. He had a lasting imprint on education. Prof. AbuSulayman generated a new life in academics, Dr. Mohsen pointed out.

Dr. Abroo Aman Andrabi, Assistant Professor, Department of Islamic Studies, Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi, touched upon 'Prof. AbdulHamid A. AbuSulayman: A visionary legacy in Islamic thought and scholarly reform'. She said that Prof. AbuSulayman reflected compassion, humility and human dignity. His ideas were responsive to modern challenges. He called for methodological and scientific development without compromising Islamic thought. He wanted the integration of Islamic knowledge with global knowledge, she noted. Dr. Abdul Wahed Jalal Nori, Assistant Professor, AHAS Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, IIUM, referred to Prof. AbuSulayman's idea of the distribution of resources and

the quantification of justice. He touched upon several issues, like economic priorities according to Islam, ethical leadership of Muslims and addressing contemporary global economic crisis raised by Prof. AbuSulayman.

Mr. Muhammad Mahmood Shihab Al-Naimi, researcher in the field of Islamic thought, Malaysia, spoke on the repercussions of distorting the Islamic world vision from Prof. AbdulHamid A. AbuSulayman's perspective. He discussed quantification of scientific paradigm and programmes. He also shed light on the science of *Shariah* and engineering.

Day-2, December 12, 2024

Technical Session-III

The third technical session was chaired by Prof. Hamidullah Marazi. The session focused on '*Works of Prof. AbdulHamid Ahmad AbuSulayman*'.

Dr. Mohamed Sheikh Alio, Assistant Professor, AHAS Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, IIUM, spoke on the Arabic works of Prof. AbdulHamid A. AbuSulayman. He said that Prof. AbuSulayman was a great Muslim scholar, leader, thinker, educationist, author and capacity builder. He introduced innovative ideas to the contemporary traditional discourse regarding Islamisation of Knowledge. He contributed to 23 major Arabic works, either as a sole author, co-author or editor in a time span of 59 years. He published 39 articles between 1965 and 2015 through 12 journals in nine countries, including India, Malaysia, Morocco, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. His works had theoretical and institutional impact on Muslim *Ummah*, Sheikh Alio noted.

Dr. Mohammad Muslim, Assistant Professor, Department of Islamic Studies, AMU, Aligarh, focused on 'Islamic parenting: A study by Prof. AbdulHamid A. AbuSulayman'. He said, nowadays parenting is a big challenge. Children need attention of their parents because they are careless. They should get Islamic parenting.

Parenting is not an easy thing. Parents should first learn Islamic values. There should be parent-child relationship as suggested by Prof. AbuSulayman. Environment in which they are living should be favourable to Islamic values. *Surah Luqman* of the Qur'an has laid down guidance for parenting, he observed.

Dr. Mohammad Ajmal, Assistant Professor, Centre for Arabic and African Studies, School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, JNU, New Delhi, spoke on "The genius of Prof. AbdulHamid A. AbuSulayman in the light of his book 'The problem of tyranny and corruption in Islamic thought and political history: A critical and analytical assessment'". He said that the *Ummah* imbibed Islamic values and Islamic teachings since the beginning to lead the life in a good way. Prof. AbuSulayman stressed the need for building the concept of society as per Islam. He also insisted on preventing the prevailing corruption and tyranny in Muslim countries.

Dr. Fauzia Maraam, former Ph.D. fellow, Department of Islamic Studies, AMU, Aligarh, spoke on Prof. AbdulHamid A. AbuSulayman's book 'Parenting: An exploration in Parent-Child Relations: A guide to raising children'. She referred to the rights and duties of parents and children. She also discussed the role of the family and a healthy environment to raise children. Parents must produce children who love Allah. Prof. AbuSulayman used to emphasise the need for building a good and strong nation, she said. Dr. Rukhshanda Shaheen from the Department of Islamic Studies, AMU, Aligarh, spoke on 'Crisis in Muslim thought: A critique of Prof. AbdulHamid A. AbuSulayman'. She observed that according to Prof. AbuSulayman, *Ummah* is a prisoner to the old ideas. He discussed the methodological ideologies. He wanted that the Islamic knowledge be integrated with modern knowledge, she held. Dr. Mohammad Azam Qasmi from the Department of Sunni

Theology, AMU, focused on the 'Character and Personality Development: The perspective of Prof. AbdulHamid A. AbuSulayman'. He said that Prof. AbuSulayman laid emphasis on the role of parents in the character building of a child. This was very important for friendship and shared values. This was also essential for moral, ethical, intellectual and social development, he noted.

Dr. Mohammad Shekai Alam of the IIUM, spoke on 'Islamic principles in International Relations: A value-driven approach to Conflict Resolution and Peace Building'. He said that the world was consistently in conflict. Islamic theory of international relations was the answer to the contemporary global problems. He held that the involvement of the US and Russia was responsible for ignoring human rights. There was a need for consultation and consensus building in the world, he added.

Technical Session-IV

Chaired by Prof. Mohammad Ishaque, the fourth technical session was focused on '*Islamiyat Al-Ma'arifah and Prof. AbdulHamid Ahmad AbuSulayman's thoughts*'.

Prof. (Dr.) Asem Shehadeh Saleh Ali, Head, AHAS Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, IIUM, spoke on 'The collective mind in the Islamisation of Knowledge according to Prof. AbdulHamid A. AbuSulayman in the light of epistemology'. He said that Prof. AbuSulayman called for application of Islamisation of Knowledge and incorporation of collective minds. His approach was analytical. He stressed the need for identifying areas of agreement and disagreement. He said analysis is dynamic. Prof. AbuSulayman left an intellectual legacy of Islam, he observed. Prof. (Dr.) Jamal Ahmed Bashier Badi from AHAS Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, IIUM, touched upon the topic 'Prof. AbdulHamid A. AbuSulayman's project on creative

thinking from an idea to reality'. He said that in 1995, Prof. AbuSulayman formed a committee consisting of 10 academicians from different departments of IIUM, Malaysia to design a syllabus. In December 1996, he established the general studies department under Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, IIUM. He had a visionary intellect. He suggested that his creative thinking should be included in universities in the Muslim world as a subject. But the creative thinking course has since been abolished in the IIUM, he said.

Dr. Aijaz Ahmed, Associate Professor, Department of Islamic Studies, AMU, spoke on 'Prof. AbdulHamid A. AbuSulayman's way of thinking: A study with special reference to his integrated approach to education and intellectual reform'. He called Prof. AbuSulayman a great scholar and a visionary. He occupied a distinctive place among Islamic scholars. He was very practical. Many internal and external challenges were imposed by western scholars on Islamic knowledge. He was for the revitalisation of Muslim education for the benefit of *Ummah*. He also stressed the need for generating and sharing Islamic knowledge and values, Dr. Ahmed stated.

Dr. Siti Hadija Mohd, Assistant Professor, Department of History and Civilisation, AHAS Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, IIUM, discussed on 'Historiographical Documentation and Impact Assessment of Prof. AbdulHamid A. AbuSulayman's selected Public Addresses'. She said that Prof. AbuSulayman's public addresses presented a significant, yet under-appreciated part of his intellectual legacy. His personal addresses were filled with personal anecdotes. His speeches were delivered during critical times when Muslims faced internal and external challenges. Calling for engaging with the Qur'an, he laid emphasis on the education that

fostered independent thing which was creative and problem solving, she held.

Valedictory Session

As a guest of honour at the valedictory session, Prof. Emeritus Datuk Dr. Osman Bakar, Rector, IIUM, Malaysia, said that IIUM humbly remembered the legacy of Prof. AbdulHamid Ahmad AbuSulayman. He was a visionary man for integrating Islamic knowledge with modern education. He addressed ethical and moral challenges. He promoted cultural dialogue. Owing to his endeavours, IIUM is now the world's leading Islamic University. He also promoted contemporary thinking among Muslim intellectuals. He had a holistic approach to epistemology and world view. Prof. Bakar asked for drawing inspiration from Prof. AbuSulayman's legacy.

Dr. Zaid Barzinji, President, Maqasid Institute, USA, in his speech, as another guest of honour, observed that Prof. AbuSulayman excelled in economics too. He knew that his vision required several generations to realise. He said "The Qur'an has reflection of cycles. There is need for discovering and committing to the Qur'an. World view is the starting point of reflection cycles. The challenge is to trust ourselves to approach the Qur'an. Reform cycles also apply in education and life". While Prof. AbuSulayman was involved in reforming higher education, he also cared about early learning as a critical point, Dr. Barzinji said.

Imam Mohamed Magid, former President, Islamic Society of North America, USA, as another guest of honour, observed that Prof. AbuSulayman was a great contributor. He believed that there was gap between

text and context, and tried to address the complications of context. His contributions were very amazing. His approaches included the holistic approach to the Qur'an, the life-style of the Prophet (PBUH) and the encouragement to the people to understand the context. He allowed one to engage with him, Imam Magid maintained.

Datuk Prof. (Dr.) Berghout Abdelaziz, Dean, International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation, AHAS Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, IIUM, held that Prof. AbuSulayman's multi-disciplinary background like, economics, Islamic Studies, led him to

reflected his character and personality. He had forays into public administration and academic administration. He was a thinker, author and a good husband. He was a dedicated family man and considerate to the weak. Though he had strong opinions, yet he was not against others. He had strong arguments for what he believed and not strong in attacking others. Several things made him somebody. These were: character-intellectual; think by looking around you; and actual problem of the *Ummah*. He was a global thinker, original thinker, brave thinker and had unique packaging of thoughts. He said that Prof. AbuSulayman did not give references because he was an original thinker. He had long sentences, some of which were of half a page or one full page, Prof. Kasule concluded.

In his presidential address, Patron of the IOS, Prof. Z.M. Khan, said that he had a chance to play host to Prof. AbuSulayman in Delhi because of Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam. He also had an opportunity to visit

his office in the United States. His views on women under Islam were very well explained. He proved how the interpretation of the Qur'an was wrongly used. He said all the generations are not the same in the eye of the Almighty. New generations revolutionise things.

At the end, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted on the occasion:

1. While literature encompassing most of the aspects of civilisational changes had been developed in the world, especially in Europe, Prof. AbdulHamid Ahmad AbuSulayman developed thought for progress of Muslims and their



Speakers from top to bottom (L-R) Row 1: Prof. Emeritus Datuk Dr. Osman Bakar, Dr. Zaid Barzinji, Imam Mohamed Magid; Row 2: Datuk Prof. (Dr.) Berghout Abdelaziz, Prof. Omar Hasan Kasule, Prof. Z.M. Khan; Row 3: Prof. (Dr.) Rahmah Binti Ahmad H. Osman, Prof. (Dr.) Muhammad Mumtaz Ali.

identify Islamic perspective. He developed the idea of Islamisation of Knowledge. In him, Muslim mind was more inclusive. "Islamisation of Knowledge means dealing with our legacy. His dynamism of Islamic knowledge has four points – Importance of *Maqasid* of the Qur'an and importance of reform of the Muslim mind; Muslim mind to deal with law; Importance of *Ikhlāq* or ethics and importance of *Ijtihad* of Muslim mind or Muslim world", Dr. Berghout added.

In his valedictory address, Prof. Omar Hasan Kasule, Secretary General, IIIT, USA, held that Prof. AbuSulayman left a rich legacy, which

march ahead, based on the Qur'an, the life of the Prophet (PBUH) and the Muslim literature with due reason and rationality.

2. While facing challenges from theorists living in the scientific and technologically rich environment, Prof. AbdulHamid Ahmad AbuSulayman successfully made a way for thinking with educational missions as ingrained in the revealed knowledge, mainly the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*.
3. While the philosophical contribution of Prof. AbdulHamid Ahmad AbuSulayman has been studied by scholars with concern in various institutions and universities, identifying reasons for crisis in Muslim mind, oppression and inequality, the scholars are urged upon to pay more attention on his writings to identify the thought for a balanced approach in present globalising world for more equity, equality and justice for all human beings living in various jurisdictions.
4. That the existing institutions and universities should have specific research programmes for exploring the socio-economic and political environment, with responses of Prof. AbdulHamid Ahmad AbuSulayman.
5. That proper methodologies should be developed for inter-religious understanding as has been adopted by Prof. AbdulHamid Ahmad AbuSulayman to deliver the facts with original flavors and natural essence.

6. The creative thinking paper which was included in the curriculum of IIUM by AHAS Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences has been unfortunately abolished in 2023. This conference strongly proposes and recommends to the authorities concerned at IIUM to include it again, and urges upon other universities of the Muslim world to include it in their curriculum as a tribute to Prof. AbuSulayman.
7. That a chair in the name of Prof. Abu Sulayman in Islamic thought and International Relations may be created at the Institute of Objective Studies (IOS), New Delhi.

Asian Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.

The programme began with the recitation of some Qur'anic verses.

In his welcome address, Secretary General of the IOS, Mr. Mohammad Alam, highlighted the activities of the Institute. Then, referring to the book, he said that it was a prestigious publication of the Institute. The book focused on the contribution of the noted scholar of Islamic banking and finance, Prof. Mohammad Nejatullah Siddiqi. His books in English were recognised nationally and internationally. "The book is a significant contribution to understanding the life and legacy of

Prof. Mohammad Nejatullah Siddiqi. It holds immense relevance for the contemporary Muslim world", he added.

Speaking about the book, Prof. Javed Ahmad Khan, editor, observed that the book has been published by the IOS on the contribution of Late Prof. Siddiqi. Prof. Mohammad Nejatullah Siddiqi theorised in 1960s the

Islamic banking and finance without interest. He was the most prominent social scientist and economist of Independent India. He said that the book was worth reading. It was a collection of essays on various aspects of Islamic banking and finance as propounded by Prof. Siddiqi. He was meticulous about training young students. Prof. Siddiqi also laid emphasis on educating madrasa students in financial literacy and development. He said that Prof. Siddiqi embodied three core values – mental clarity, modesty and family. His vision for Islamic economics was not just theoretical, but aimed at practical global development.



On the dais (L-R): Prof. (Ms.) Haseena Hashia, Prof. M. Afzal Wani, Prof. Javed Ahmad Khan and Mr. Mohammad Alam releasing the book titled "Mohammad Nejatullah Siddiqi: Life and Contributions to Islamic Economics"

At the end of the conference, Prof. Dr. Haseena Hashia, Vice-Chairperson, IOS proposed a vote of thanks to the speakers and participants of the conference.

IOS book "Mohammad Nejatullah Siddiqi: Life and Contributions to Islamic Economics" released

The book "Mohammad Nejatullah Siddiqi: Life and Contributions to Islamic Economics" was released at a virtual programme organised by the Institute of Objective Studies on December 21, 2024.

It may be recalled that the book has been edited by Prof. Javed Ahmad Khan, former Director, Centre for West

Prof. Emeritus Dato Dr. Azmi Omar, President and CEO of INCEIF University, Malaysia, released the book virtually. Speaking on the occasion, he said that Prof. Siddiqi's contribution was not only in Islamic economics, but also ethics in economics. He was a unique individual and was ahead of his times. Highlighting the enduring relevance of Prof. Siddiqi's ideas, he said that in today's world marked of economic inequality and moral crisis, his theories offered a beacon of hope.

He theorised Islamic economics in the context of Islamic thought. His inter-disciplinary approach to economics expanded the scope of Islamic economics. He also raised the question of poverty and the foundational area in Islamic economics and finance. A lot of research on Islamic economics and finance was still needed. As the founder of modern Islamic economics, he would always be remembered for his scholarly contributions and unwavering dedication to building a better world, Dr. Omar added.

In his key-address, CEO of Fajr Capital Group, Dubai, UAE, Dato Iqbal Ahmed Khan, reflected on his personal relationship with Prof. Nejatullah Siddiqi during his days at Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. He said that Prof. Siddiqi used to discuss Islamic economics even in his university days. During Emergency in 1975, he was among the intellectuals imprisoned for their opinions.

He held that his father, Mr. Iftikhar Ahmed Khan strongly supported Prof. Siddiqi during those difficult days. His understanding of Islamic economics and finance was very deep. He was in the service of humanity and faith. Consultation with Prof. Siddiqi impacted his life. His father visited Prof. Siddiqi in prison during the Emergency. He observed that according to Prof. Siddiqi, faith and reason could work together. His ideas were rooted in Islamic faith. He said that he is doing a small service to fulfil Prof. Siddiqi's dream of Islamic finance.

Another key speaker, Dr. Mohammad Ahmadullah Siddiqi, Professor Emeritus of Journalism and Public Relations, Western Illinois University, USA, and nephew of Prof. Mohammad Nejatullah Siddiqi, held that he used to attend discussions at the home of his uncle, Prof. Nejatullah Siddiqi. He lived with him and saw him focusing on the people who were developing his ideas of Islamic economics. He received the guidance of his uncle. In his book, *Maqasid-e-Shariah*, he presented a survey of Islamic economics. He said that economic system under capitalist and socialist system, was exploitative. Both the systems did not focus on fairness and justice. He praised the establishment of an Economic Research Centre in Aligarh as one of Prof. Siddiqi's notable achievements. He hoped that Prof. Siddiqi's legacy and scholarship would continue to inspire scholars in the field of Islamic economics and finance.

Prof. Abdul Azim Islahi, a student of Prof. Nejatullah Siddiqi and ex-Professor of Islamic economics, King Abdul Aziz University, Jeddah, KSA, highlighted his deep understanding of Islamic banking and his advocacy for a non-profit economic system, and its relevance in today's context. He said that Prof. Siddiqi was dissatisfied with the existing Islamic economic models and the drive for reformation, particularly in promoting financial literacy and economic empowerment within the Muslim community. He held that Prof. Siddiqi's vision extended beyond theoretical frameworks to practical applications that could transform lives.

Head of the Department of Economics, Abida Inamdar Senior College of Arts, Science and Commerce, Pune, Dr. Aftab Alam pointed out that banking without interest was the main contribution of Prof. Mohammad Nejatullah Siddiqi. He said that prohibition of *Riba* (interest) in all financial transaction which was decreed by Islamic law

(*Shariah*), was one of his key themes. He remarked that Prof. Siddiqi's work contrasted the inequalities of an interest-based economy with justice and equity embedded in Islamic finance. He also explored financial instruments like *Mudharabah* (profit sharing) *Musharakah* (joint venture) and *Wakalah* (agency) emphasising their application in contemporary banking processes.

In his presidential remarks, Chairman of the IOS, Prof. M. Afzal Wani, provided a historical perspective of Prof. Siddiqi's personal and professional life. He remarked that sovereignty, polity and economy were the three pillars of Prof. Siddiqi's Islamic economic thought in which he highlighted economic interfaces, injustice and the cultural identities. He also focused on the key factors of the book and said how he balanced the situation of Islamic economics and the welfare economy. He came up with some of the important recommendations. One of these was tackling unemployment. Islamic theorists must know how to reduce unemployment and how the resources could be used in a sustained manner. Second, managing inflation as inflation would be there, but it should be steady. Third, fostering consumer confidence and investing in banking, cooperative sector or elsewhere and using the things for human welfare.

At the end, Vice-Chairperson of the Institute, Prof. (Ms.) Haseena Hashia, extended a vote of thanks to the speakers and participants.

IOS Condolence Meet to Pay Tribute to A.G. Noorani

A condolence meeting was organised by the Institute of Objective Studies on September 12, 2024 at its auditorium to mourn the death of the lawyer, scholar, constitutional expert, political commentator, author, journalist and a recipient of the IOS Lifetime Achievement Award, A.G. Noorani, who passed away in Mumbai recently at the age of 93. A fairly good

number of his admirers, scholars and journalists gathered to pay homage to him.

The programme started with recitation of some verses from the Holy Qur'an by Hafiz Asif Jamal from the Urdu section of the Institute.

Vice-Chairperson of the Institute, Prof. (Ms.) Haseena Hashia, who conducted the proceedings, briefly spoke about the life and contribution of A.G. Noorani. She described him as a "mobile encyclopaedia". He was a lawyer, political commentator, journalist and a writer. To top it all, he was a bold and non-conformist personality. He was awarded the Sixth IOS Lifetime Achievement Award for his contribution in the field of prolific writing and expert comments on topical issues. His book on Kashmiris is still regarded as standard work on the hill state, she said.

Paying tribute to A.G. Noorani, Professor Emeritus of Islamic Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, Prof. Akhtarul Wasey, held that he was an extra-ordinary person who was born in Mumbai and was also laid to rest there. He was an author who possessed facts on which he built up his works. He wrote on the RSS and Kashmir with facts and figures. Whatever he wrote, he did it with boldness. He said that Noorani was a self-respecting person who never went to Delhi even on the invitation of Mrs. Indira Gandhi. He was always armed with facts and never compromised on principles. Once he was invited by the late Sayyid Hamid to speak on *Sirah*. His speech was so enchanting that it held the audience spell-bound. He always used facts and proofs to support his contention while writing an article or a book. He was a regular contributor to several newspapers and magazines,

including the *Frontline*. He brought to the fore the facts which were unassailable. Though Noorani is no more in the world, his work is alive, he added.

Former Director-General of Jammu and Kashmir tourism, Mohammad Saleem Beg held that Noorani's admirers were still not less in number. He was a lawyer, historian, political activist and a journalist. He was a well-wisher of Kashmir and the Kashmiris loved him so much. His views on Kashmir were truly authentic and dynamic. Kashmiris would always remain grateful to him. Nobody was as sincere for the Kashmiris as he had an interface with truth and always

for fortnightly English magazine *Frontline* alone. Besides, he regularly wrote for several newspapers. He said that 93 years were not enough to read whatever he wrote. He came into contact with Noorani in 1993 and worked as a researcher for some of his books. His association with Kashmir dated back to the days of Sheikh Abdullah when he was at the helm. He recalled how Mridula Sarabhai, the sister of the then Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, Vikram Sarabhai and a congress leader, engaged Noorani to appear for Sheikh Abdullah in the apex court as his counsel. Kashmiris believed that their ideology had resemblance with his ideas on Kashmir. He had a dynamic stand on the Kashmir issue.

Gilani pointed out that Noorani had briefed Brajesh Mishra, National Security Advisor and Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee on Kashmir. He had said that he owed a debt and wanted to pay off by completing the third volume of his book on Babri Masjid. He exposed

Pakistan on her China policy. So many things would have been laid bare, had the second volume of his book on India-China border dispute been completed. He was all praise for the IOS Chief Patron, Dr. M. Manzoor Alam for honouring him with the IOS Lifetime Achievement Award. He also praised the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) chief Asaduddin Owaisi, M.P., for taking care of Mr. Noorani. He made a living by the royalty he received from his books. He concluded saying that the *Millat* cold-shouldered him.

Senior Urdu journalist, A.U. Asif, said that Iftikhar Gilani was the best available person to speak about Mr.



Speakers from top to bottom (L-R) Row 1: Prof. Akhtarul Wasey, Mr. Mohammad Saleem Beg, Prof. M. Afzal Wani; Row 2: Prof. Faizan Mustafa, Mr. Iftikhar Gilani, Mr. Suhail Anjum; Row 3: Mr. A.U. Asif, Prof. Saifuddin Soz and Prof. (Ms.) Haseena

supported it. He was of the view that the Kashmiris did not make out their cause properly. He also believed that the Pakistanis were casual in their approach. He was undeterred from speaking the truth. He was very fond of Kashmiri dishes. While in Delhi, he never skipped 'Nihari' from a particular hotel in the walled city. He loved food wherever it was available. In this respect, he was very versatile. His mental disposition was very tough, Beg remarked.

Senior journalist based in Turkey, Iftikhar Gilani, observed that Noorani was a regular contributor to the *Frontline* and *Outlook*. He wrote a total of 21 books. He also wrote 800 articles



Noorani. He touched upon all the aspects of his life. He was one of the rare personalities who was quoted for his facts and figures. He did full justice to every topic he selected for writing. He suggested Gilani to write a book on Mr. Noorani since he was very close to him. He noted that Mr. Noorani's writings were very argumentative. But before his death, he would have made some more disclosures about the Babri Masjid.

Senior Congress leader of Kashmir and former Union Minister, Prof. Saifuddin Soz mentioned that he knew him since the past three decades. He was a *Qalandar* (a spiritual person with inner higher knowledge) and an embodiment of truth. He had deep understanding of history. He wrote a book exclusively based on Article 370 of the Constitution. His work on Kashmir was the last book he wrote. He said that Mr. Noorani boldly defended the self-determination demand of the Kashmiris. He spoke truth so long as he was alive. His book on Article 370 was very voluminous. He had a deep understanding of Indian Muslims and the Jammu and Kashmir Constitution. He said that he never came across a person of his stature. He was a person who could never be fixed. He equally loved Hindus, Muslims and other religions. Mr. Noorani was true to the core and led a life of a bold person, he concluded.

Vice-Chancellor of Chanakya National Law University, Patna, Prof. Faizan Mustafa commented that there were many prominent personalities in the last generation who had concern for the *Millat*. Mr. Noorani was one of them. His book on Indo-China relations was so critically written that several research scholars have done a Ph.D. on it. He also wrote on political trials, including the trial of the great Greek philosopher, Socrates. He said that "jury which tried the Socrates consisted of 501 members". He also wrote on the trial of the last Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar. Mr. Noorani wrote that Bahadur Shah Zafar's trial was not

fair because he was a sovereign and no British law could apply to him. Moreover, this case was not brought into the public domain. His trial was also not fair because it was conducted under the Evidence Act. He said that Mr. Noorani also wrote on the trial of the great martyr, Shaheed Bhagat Singh. His trial too was not fair. According to him, all the decisions under Article 370 were illegal. He also wrote on the film "Censor Board". Prof. Mustafa added that he wrote on almost every issue before leaving this mundane world.

Senior journalist and Voice of America Urdu representative in India, Suhail Anjum described his death as a big loss to India in general and Muslim community in particular. There was no dearth of scholars in the country, but he was matchless in several respects. He was versatile as he touched upon almost all the important issues. He wrote on Babri Masjid and his articles were very analytical. In 2005, he interviewed the then President of Pakistan, General Pervez Musharraf, which was published in the *Frontline* as a cover story. He was a regular contributor to several magazines and newspapers. Mr. Noorani never compromised on facts, he said.

In his presidential remarks, the Chairman of the IOS, Prof. M. Afzal Wani observed that Mr. A.G. Noorani was witness to the making of the Constitution. Before 1947, people had envisioned that India would become a sovereign democratic republic in which every citizen should get his right. This was a mindset of the leaders who visualised India as free and democratic polity. Referring to Mr. A.G. Noorani's contribution, he said that whenever he pleaded he did it for federalism. He always remained uncompromising. He used to highlight the basic foundations of the Constitution. Justice Krishna Ayyar and A.G. Noorani were of the same nature, he said. His personality could not be epitomised in a few adjectives. His thoughts and ideas did not concern one community, they were

for all. He emphasised the need for developing a culture to nurture researchers. "As Muslim intellectuals, we should understand and research niceties of the issues. If any loophole is found, it should be plugged". He said that Mr. Noorani had deep understanding and the spirit to view the Constitution in its right perspective. Indians wanted a comprehensive Constitution and a stable country which they secured, he concluded.

The condolence meet ended with *dua*, followed by a vote of thanks proposed by Prof. (Ms.) Haseena Hashia.

Activities of the IOS Chapters

KOLKATA CHAPTER

IOS Kolkata Chapter's Discussion on "Unity Amidst Diversity"

A significant intellectual session was organised by IOS Kolkata Chapter of the Institute of Objective Studies, New Delhi on December 2, 2024, where renowned scholar Dr. Saeedur Rahman Faizi, President of Al-Nadwah Islamic Center, Canada, delivered an inspiring lecture on the topic "Unity Amidst Diversity".

In his thought-provoking lecture, Dr. Faizi underlined the importance of unity for the progress of nations. He said: "The most developed nations are those that have embraced unity despite their differences. Islam has always taught us to accept diversity and establish a society based on justice and equality. In India too, there is unity in diversity where diverse religions and cultures and customs co-exist".

He identified ignorance as the root cause of poverty, and stated that addressing ignorance could resolve numerous socio-economic issues. He acknowledged the remarkable contributions of the Institute of Objective Studies' founder Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam, who dedicated his life to the cause of promoting knowledge and research for the betterment of the community.

The IOS pioneered in focusing on marginalised sections of society as well. The Institute's multifarious activities put it on the top of the organisations, engaged in the same tasks, he added.

Dr. Faizi also referred the challenges posed by modern societal trends, such as the increasing inclination toward gender change in Western societies, describing it as a

community. He praised the IOS for consistently shedding light on critical social issues through knowledge and research. He concluded by urging the community to promote mutual respect, knowledge, and research as the foundation of unity and collective strength.

The programme began with an introduction of the IOS by Mr. Abdul Basit Ismail, the Coordinator of the



On the dais (L-R): Dr. Ashraf Ali Azhari, Dr. Sabah Ismail Nadwi, Dr. Saeedur Rahman Faizi and Mr. Mahtab Alam Nadwi

social evil and a sign of moral degradation. He stressed the need for educating younger generation to respect and gladly accept natural gifts bestowed by Allah. Thus there was a need for cherishing social values that were essential for one's life, he noted.

In his presidential address, Dr. Sabah Ismail Nadwi emphasised that the unity amidst diversity was the cornerstone of progress for a

IOS Kolkata Chapter. He briefly explained the significance of the topic. The session was moderated by Mr. Mahtab Alam Nadwi, who successfully conducted the proceedings.

At the end of the programme, Mr. Abdul Basit Ismail proposed a vote of thanks. Fairly a good number of scholars and prominent citizens attended the discussion.

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